Memorial Address

On the Life and Character of

Abraham Lincoln,

Delibered at Concord, New Hampshire, June 1, 1865,

By Hon. James W. Patterson,

At the Request of the State Authorities.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

DELIVERED AT

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, JUNE 1, 1865,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE STATE AUTHORITIES,

BY HON. JAMES W. PATTERSON.

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1865.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE,

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, CONCORD.

At a meeting of the Governor and Council, held at the Council Chamber, June 7, 1865, the following resolution was unanimously passed:

Resolved, That in behalf of the State, we tender to Hon. JAMES W. PATTERSON our most sincere thanks for the eloquent Memorial Address upon the life and character of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, delivered in this city upon the occasion of the late National Fast, and that the Secretary of State be requested to solicit a copy for publication.

Attest:

B. GERRISH, Jr., *Secretary of State.*

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MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

In glad compliance with the proclamation of the public authorities, the people of the commonwealth have rested to-day from their ordinary vocations and have gathered here at the Capital of the State, to represent the universal sorrow, and pay a formal but heartfelt tribute of grief and respect to the memory of our murdered chief magistrate, who, like Israel's great leader, fell on the mount of vision, "while yet his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

The irrepressible sorrow of our hearts prompts to the filial duty which, as a nation, we could not innocently neglect.

It is the Christian apotheosis which a bereaved people may give to a ruler, the grand results of whose life, and the masculine beauty of whose character, have entitled him to the honor of father of the reëstablished and regenerated republic.

Treason, the cowardly offspring of slavery, in dalliance with political ambition, returning with reeking hands from the slaughter of three hundred thousand of our innocent children, and burning with the shame of defeat, has assassinated the foremost, the noblest and the best of our great men, and has thereby illustrated to the shocked and startled nations of the world the inherent wrong of oppression and the unutterable preciousness of liberty.

The time, too, was ominous and suggestive. The horrid tragedy, as if providentially designed to convict the carping royalists and the baffled liberals of Europe of the strength and resources of popular governments, was suffered to occur at one of those hazardous turns in the tide of public affairs, when, among a people not possessed of the privileges nor accustomed

to the responsibilities of self-government, nor yet disciplined to calm self-reliance in the transitions of power, it would have sounded the tocsin of a fearful struggle for revolution. Doubt and anxiety had given place to confidence and exultation in the crushing defeats which loyalty had inflicted upon the forces of treason. The integrity of the Union, the destruction of slavery, and the restoration of the authority of government had been assured in the surrender of the rebel army by its able commander-in-chief; the carnage and desolations, the cruelties and sufferings of the fratricidal strife which had haunted the sensibilities of that heart which throbbed only for the good of mankind, had begun to be dissipated by the joyous visions of returning peace and prosperity; but the attempt to soothe the wounded pride, to renew the alienated affections, and to restore the ruptured allegiance of a brave but conquered people, to gather up the broken threads and weave anew the tangled web of political organization, had not yet been made.

In that moment of fearful respite, he who had been prepared for his exalted career by the privations and hardships of a life of stern realities; he who had been called from obscurity to his place of preëminent difficulty and glory, was smitten down by the hand of an audacious trifler, still playing the role which his masters had set for him in the tragedy of treason.

When the voice of calumny and detraction had been stifled by the prestige of success; when all hearts turned to him with hope and love; while yet the dust was upon his garments which our victorious legions had raised in the capital of rebellion, and the thanksgivings of a disenthralled people were ringing in his ears; on the very day on which the heroic Anderson unfurled above the crumbled walls of Sumpter the flag first struck by the bolts of treason, and which he had pronounced the happiest of his official life, and in the place of public recreation whither he had reluctantly gone to greet and receive the congratulations of his countrymen, Abraham Lincoln passed, without warning and without pain, from the triumph and plenitude of earthly power to the rewards which eye hath not seen nor ear heard.

The frightful message flew from lake to gulf, from ocean

to ocean, and the nation stood still, mute with horror, and shuddering with an indefinable dread of undeveloped crimes in the womb of baffled hate.

But the blindness of organized villainy defeated its purposes of blood, and with but one, the most precious victim, set the black ineffaceable seal of infamy upon this gigantic effort to establish government upon a national crime.

The vile assassin, summoned to confront his victim at that bar where

> "The action lies
> In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled
> Even to the teeth and forehead of our fault
> To give in evidence,"

Perished as he by the bullet, and found an unknown grave, where the footstep of affection shall never press, and while yet the honored remains of our great chief were slowly moving to their rest amid the solemn pageantry of universal grief.

God has here vindicated the rights of man as never before in history, and foreshadowed the doom of all institutions resting upon a subjugated race, though the humblest in the scale of intelligent beings. It would be wiser and safer to build cities upon the shaking roof of a volcano.

The hour of dread passed by, and then came the remembrance of the unfaltering courage, the steadfast purpose, the calm wisdom, the saintly charity, and the pious trust of the martyred statesman in the people and in God; and with it came also a sense of irreparable loss, of disappointed hopes and of crushed affections. The voice of song and merriment ceased, the thronged city became still at noonday, the farthest hamlet upon the borders put on the emblems of deep mourning, and strong men, unaccustomed to tears, wept in the streets like childhood in its sorrow. The deep currents of national anguish, accumulated and restrained during the perilous years of his administration, now seemed to pour together and unite all the bitterness of multiplied bereavement over the lamented representative of the mighty host of heroic dead, fallen on a thousand battle-fields and in the rebel charnel-houses of famine.

The moral attributes of Abraham Lincoln had slowly transfigured to the public imagination his very person, so that when he died that gaunt and ungainly figure left no peer in manly beauty; on no other countenance did the light of intellect and the charms of many virtues blend so sweetly as on his sad and wrinkled face. And when they bore him forth from the capitol, with all the touching insignia of civil and military honors, to his final rest in the great valley, history gives no record of the thronging of such multitudes to pay court and homage to king or conqueror as came voluntarily from city and country to lay their tribute of respect upon the bier of this peasant ruler, passing to his grave amid the scenes and friends of his early home, where, through poverty and toil and honest merit, he had risen to the proud preëminence of civil power, and to the yet loftier sphere of confidence and affection in the hearts of his countrymen.

To that tomb, as to Mount Vernon, pilgrims from distant States, and strangers from other climes, will hereafter come to drink in the inspiration and the strength that goes forth from the resting-place of one who sealed a life of unselfish and unremitting toil in the cause of constitutional liberty and social enfranchisement with his blood.

Here I would gladly close this discourse, for I am oppressed with a consciousness of the impotency of speech to utter the overwhelming sense of bereavement with which the nation has been smitten. The public mind, relieved of the heavy burdens of war, and lifted to an ecstasy of joy by the final triumph long deferred; the loyal heart, maddened by the fiendish work of treason, and depressed by doubt and dread to the verge of despair, can find no adequate expression in the language of panegyric, of the profound and diverse emotions raised by the strange events which like battling winds have swept these months of Spring. The genius of history has crowded years into days in this tragedy of civil life, and evoked a storm of passion before which the spirit of Æschylus or Shakspeare would have stood paralyzed and speechless.

He who would add anything to the wealth of eulogium which

has already been lavished upon the departed, should "unsphere the spirit of Plato," and, divesting himself of the passions and prejudices of the revolutionary epoch, apply to the analysis of his character and polity the tests of a sound political philosophy, reaching to the interests of after generations and the responsibilities of life which lie beyond the plain of technical politics. But this is the work of history. Time alone has the power to distinguish between what is essential and what is accidental; to remove the scaffolding and bring out simple and salient the additions which we have made to the temple of our liberties. It is reserved to our children to cast down our false gods, though they may be left to set up other divinities less worthy of adoration.

Sufficient for this time are the lessons of that remarkable career, ascending through slow gradations from obscure penury to what it is not premature to pronounce the seat of largest influence and honor among the civil magistracies of Christian nations. Such a life is a positive and imperishable power added to the moral forces of the world. That whole circle of civic and private virtues which crown his memory have received a fresh beauty from the baptism of his martyr blood. Hereafter, young men, moved by the impulses of an honorable ambition, and struggling upward against poverty and the barriers of social distinctions, will be inspired with new aspirations and more persistent exertions by the lofty achievements and more than royal preëminence reached by our fallen chief. They will learn, too, that the surest path to the attainment of the noblest prizes among a free and intelligent people is not in the mazy labyrinth through which low cunning, corrupting as it moves, worms its way by bribery and dishonest arts into the places of power, but on the open highway where patriotism, intelligent labor and real merit perform their daily duty.

Abraham Lincoln, born in Kentucky in 1809, was the son of poor parents, who removed from the State in the eighth year of his age, to Indiana, in order to place their children where the institution of slavery could not oppose an insuperable obstacle to their advancement in life. There, in a log hut, on the borders

of civilization, and beyond its social and educational privileges, "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit" till the day of his majority. No extraordinary event, if we except a voyage to New Orleans on a flat-boat, at the age of nineteen, with a companion of his own age, at this period of his life interrupted his ordinary labors as a backwoodsman. Taught to read by his pious mother, who was taken from him when but a boy of ten years, he read and pondered as he toiled, his narrow library comprising Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Æsop's Fables, and the lives of Clay and Washington. And these, more than all the studies of his subsequent life, moulded his character and determined his modes of thought and style of expression. They were reproduced in the policy and productions of his public life.

In 1830, at the age of twenty-one, he removed with his father to Illinois. There, as a hired workman, as a captain in the Black Hawk war, as a student at law and a member of the legislature, he passed seven years of splendid preparation in the hard school which Providence had set for the perfecting of its chosen instrument.

Poverty brought labor and habits of industry; privations gave a broad experience and sympathy with those who eat bread in the sweat of their brows; the irrepressible impulses of a mind conscious of strength induced study and thought. These were the sources of that intelligence, that tender sensibility to the misfortunes and sorrows of the humblest citizen, and that large executive ability which characterized his subsequent career.

In 1837 he commenced the practice of law in Springfield, and soon won an enviable reputation as a lawyer of large ability and unquestioned integrity. Nine years later he was elected a Representative in Congress, where he served but a single term. There he was not forth-putting, nor a frequent speaker, but faithful to his convictions and earnest in the discharge of duty. It was not however until 1858, in his noted struggle with Judge Douglas for the Senate, that he achieved a national reputation as an able and eloquent speaker. That series of debates, and two or three speeches made subsequently, in as many different

States, unquestionably secured his nomination to the Presidency in 1860. The clearness of his conceptions, the transparent honesty and homely strength with which he expressed his ideas, made a deep and favorable impression upon the public mind.

The paramount theme of discussion in the debate between the two candidates was one or more of the Protean forms of the question of slavery, which for nearly half a century had vexed our domestic politics. Mr. Lincoln was a thorough master of the subject. He had inherited a painful sense of its wrongs and crushing power; had watched its aggressions upon free territory, and the platform of principles underlying our republican institutions; had profoundly studied its history, its nature, and its insidious purposes.

In Congress, and in the senatorial canvass, as in his first inaugural, he conceded that slavery in the States was an institution resting upon State rights, with which the general government in time of peace had no power to interfere without a change of the constitution. But he held that Freedom was National, and that it was therefore the duty of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and to exclude it from all the public territory. He supported every measure before the House tending to such a result, and opposed the arrogant claims introduced upon the assumption that slavery was national.

This, in brief, is the simple story of his life until, escaping the plot which treason had laid for his assassination, and standing at the Capitol, he took the solemn oath, in the presence of God and his assembled countrymen, to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States," and made an earnest and touching appeal to the disaffected to pause "before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes." "We are not enemies," he says, "but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chord of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nation."

Martyred patriot! That oath has been redeemed by thine own precious blood, and the chorus of the Union again swells, but it is to the mystic chord of memories stretching from fresh battle-fields and patriot graves to the living hearts and hearth-stones of this broad land, and touched, not by angels in the bosom of traitors, but by the angels of liberty revisiting their desolate homes, or marching jubilant, though viewless, in the thinned but triumphant ranks from which they fell in the great struggle for a free government.

Of the events in the crowded administration of the late chief magistrate, from the commencement of the war till the surrender of Lee, I need not speak. All the thrilling details and momentous issues of the mighty struggle for the success of popular institutions have passed into history, and are to-day as familiar to the children of the land as household words. All unaccustomed as he was to official responsibility and to the conduct of great public affairs, it would be idle to deny that experienced statesmen felt some solicitude, perhaps distrust, as they perceived the precursors of an impending revolution. Would his hand be strong and skillful? Would his mind be calm and clear, and his voice steady when the tempest should strike and drive the straining ship amid perils unmarked by chart, unseen by pilot's eye? It was a fearful hour; it was the death-like stillness which precedes the rock and thunder of the storm, and the pulse of the nation could be heard to beat. Great principles of government and the most precious interests of humanity were at stake. Mr. Lincoln saw it all, felt it all. He did not court the danger with the rashness of an imbecile, but, with the clear prophetic vision of a great mind, shrunk from the fearful hazard.

Call to mind his familiar, but touching farewell to his old neighbors at Springfield, and you will be impressed with the self-distrust and childlike reliance upon God with which he went forth to his work. "A duty devolves upon me," he said, "which is perhaps greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never could have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon

which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him, and on the same almighty being I place my reliance for support, and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that divine assistance without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. Again I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

How painful and yet how beautiful are those simple words of leave-taking. His coming martyrdom seems to have cast its shadow upon his spirit; but his appointed work was more than life, and he gave himself to it without reservation. Time, thought, labor, and life itself, all were consecrated to the salvation of his country.

He had not been disciplined by long experience in public life; possessed but little knowledge of political philosophy; was not familiar with the workings of different governmental systems as illustrated in history, and yet what Herculean labors he had to perform; what questions of jurisdiction and political expediency to settle.

An army and navy were to be created, maintained and directed in active service upon a colossal scale and over vast areas. A depleted treasury was to be made to meet the fabulous expenditures of the government through years of destructive war, by diverting capital from the remunerative channels of productive industry. The extent and nature of the war powers conferred by the constitution upon the executive; how far and in what respects for the preservation and permanent establishment of the constitution and personal liberty he might supersede civil authority by the more summary processes of military law, these, and other complicated problems, hitherto undetermined in our national experience, were presented to the cabinet of President Lincoln for solution at the beginning of his administration. One by one the tasks were done; one by one the Gordian knots were untied or cut.

It would not be just, if it were not beyond human accomplishment, to concede to the President the exclusive honor of such vast achievements. Statesmen of the best ability and largest experience, whose names will hereafter be enrolled with Hamil-

ton's and Webster's, were among his advisers. To Seward, and Chase, and Stanton, should be given largely the glory justly due to the splendid success of their respective departments. Yet upon all Mr. Lincoln exercised his right of revision and interposed his independent judgment. The policy of a master mind, distinct and unmistakable, was impressed upon his entire administration.

It was unique and consistent, for he was never subordinated to his ministers, though inferior to some of them in extent of reading and an actual knowledge of public affairs. The action of the government upon the slavery question was all his own. There he had no superiors. He did not allow subordinates to bring the affairs of the country into inextricable confusion by an arrogant assumption of his appropriate duties and by substituting emancipation in place of the integrity of the government as the end of the war, but marked with unerring sagacity the ebb and flow of public feeling, and so timed his action as to secure the strength of the current to bear the government safely into the haven of peace rather than a political aspirant into the place of power. He knew the history of Slavery, he knew its nature, and treated it with the calm wisdom of a statesman. So posterity will decide.

Prescient of the costly penalty of blood and treasure which the Nemesis of slavery would exact, he entered upon the war with a reluctance which foreign prejudice, since swift to condemn his efficiency, stigmatized as incapacity and pusillanimity, and which even staggered the faith of personal friendship, but when the Janus gates were opened, he walked "the burning marl" as proudly as a king, and moved to his object with an energy of will as inflexible as fate.

Mr. Lincoln's administration, burdened with a multitude and magnitude of interests without a parallel, was a complete success. From its beginning to its close, he increased in statesmanship and in favor with men.

He reached a decision upon great questions with a hesitation and caution, which to minds committed to special lines of policy and of more enthusiastic temperament, seemed at first to indicate

weakness and vacillation. But it was soon discovered that his thought swept too wide a field to move rapidly. His sense of responsibility prompted to original investigation to supply the defects of experience and observation. He had not been educated to seek conclusions through logical forms and scholastic subtleties, and hence his intellect, unfettered by precedents and the authority of great names, moved to its results by ways original and peculiar to himself. He reasoned by illustrations and used anecdotes for syllogisms. Into whatever his wit was cast it gave a precipitate of wisdom, and when men have done laughing at his stories they will be used as aphorisms. His dependent frontier life had given to him mental resources and a fertility of invention which more liberal privileges and an affluent fortune might never have developed. He had been trained for fifty years in the school of Providence for a work which, if we properly garner the fruits of the revolution, can never be repeated in our history.

I am not sure that it was not fortunate for Mr. Lincoln's historic reputation that he was elevated to power at a time when the great questions of state were as new to men familiar with statecraft from boyhood as to himself; when the knottiest problems for administrative skill lay outside of the sphere of specific constitutional powers and of previous experience, and were to be solved by principles drawn from the region of natural law. Here his masculine good sense, his intuitive sagacity and reverent love of justice would give him an advantage which narrower but more learned minds could not possess. Precedents, professional technicalities and habits of mind sometimes mislead where the untrammeled intellect runs naturally in the way of truth.

We do not claim for Mr. Lincoln the highest order of intellectual greatness. He was great as a practical man — the most perfect embodiment and exponent of the American mind in our time.

Great thinkers, like Bacon and Montesquieu, ante-date revolutions and scatter seeds which may not bear fruit for a century. They are the prophets of new dispensations and create literature

and public opinion. But it is the work of great actors to realize in laws and institutions the ideas of great thinkers.

They can not be much in advance of their time, because the enthusiasm and strength of the masses are the forces by which they accomplish their work. Let them but for once become infatuated with the conceit of self-power, and alienate popular confidence, and their mission is at an end. They are hurled from power and

> "Drop from the zenith like a falling star
> On Lemnos the Ægean isle."

The test of a great actor is his ability to comprehend clearly the ideas to be put into deeds, and to secure the cordial coöperation of those for whom and by whom his life-work is done. He must have definite and positive views as to how and when things are to be done; must make his own the paramount will, and impress his character in an ever widening circle upon the men and events that revolve about him as their centre of force. Brought to this standard, Mr. Lincoln stood in the fore-front of great actors.

Undoubtedly he borrows something of greatness from his position. His life was fortunate, and to him, I can but think, his death, too, was fortunate. Living and dying, he took the tide in his affairs at its ebb. He was the central figure of an era destined to correct European views as to the strength of popular institutions, and to effect great changes in the structure of society. "Let America succeed," Thomas Carlyle is reported to have said, and "England goes to Democracy by express-train."

European statesmen, with some noble exceptions, like Bright and Cobden, to be held in perpetual remembrance in our Pantheon of great names, have persistently declared the republic too weak for a permanent or desirable form of government. European writers, with a sublime assurance, have set forth in oracular and lachrymose phrase the manner and the horrors of our downfall. By such teachings, and the excess of liberty, a reaction towards absolutism had been effected.

But here at last, on a fair field, and in its most obstinate encounter, organized oppression has been baffled and prostrated by the armies of a free people, and its petted representative, whom even the liberal minded Gladstone pronounced the founder of "a nation," a fugitive and a coward, has been dragged from the crinoline within which he had taken sanctuary, to meet the doom of a perjured traitor.

A people exercising the right of self-government, have shown themselves sufficiently wise and steadfast to sustain the government in prosecuting a wasting and bloody war, and during the fiery struggle have maintained the rights of persons and property inviolate. In the hour of triumph, and of unparalleled provocation, smothering the instinctive desire for revenge and humiliation, they have returned quietly to the peaceful industries of life, there to guard with sleepless vigilance against any encroachments upon the domain of personal liberty.

The lesson cannot be lost, and Abraham Lincoln will be honored by a grateful posterity as the directing and representative mind in the pregnant epoch of history.

But his was not merely the greatness of action or accident. There are passages not a few in his published speeches and state papers, as profound and comprehensive in their philosophy, as terse and strikingly beautiful in their expression, as any ever spoken by Burke. There is nothing in the funeral oration of Pericles which will surpass in sublimity and condensation of thought, or in the touching pathos of its eloquence, the few simple periods pronounced by him over our heroic dead at Gettysburg. I seem to see that care-worn face, and to feel the power of those loving eyes, which anticipate his utterance of the imperishable words:

"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note or long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus

far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

His last inaugural, too, affects you like the benediction of a sainted father. It is the impressive song of the great lawgiver ere he goes up upon Nebo to die.

The temperament of the late President singularly fitted him for the superlative perplexities and hardships of his exalted station. The pressure of business, the untimely importunities of friends, and the malignant opposition of enemies, were incessant, but he was never peevish. Patient and self-poised, he gave an attentive hearing to all, and then calmly and with deliberation decided upon measures of moment. He listened with a tender heart and a helping hand to the story of the despised black and the child of misfortune; to the wounded soldier, and those made widows and orphans by the war. None could detect by word or manner that he was conscious of personal or official superiority to the humblest who approached him, and yet he assumed the responsibilities and discharged the difficult and often delicate functions of his position as head of a great government with a natural ease and propriety that would have become a "prince to the manor born."

He was not a scholar nor a pedant; he was not a courtier nor a clown; he was not a saint nor a hypocrite; but he was just what he was, a plain, honest, earnest, intelligent Christian man, of the largest mould. He desired and had no need to be anything more.

They called him honest Abe. But is that so rare a virtue, even amonng public men, as to be made a characteristic distinction? He had not been educated in the Machiavelian school of statecraft, where frauds upon the public treasury and official bribes are classed as peccadiloes, and where deceit and

subterfuge, cunning and detraction are set down as political necessities, if not essential virtues, in a public functionary. But in this he did not stand alone. The honesty of Lincoln was something more. Like the justice of Aristides, it reached the heart, and gave him the life of a pure and honorable citizen, who left no stain upon his reputation. It applied the virtues of the Decalogue to the conduct of national and international affairs as fully as to the intercourse of private life. It did more than this, it shaped his political policy and made him incorruptible and steadfast in the advocacy and maintenance of his conscientious convictions of duty.

As in Washington, so in Lincoln, there was a remarkable blending of intellectual and spiritual qualities which imparted to his character something of the attributes of a father and sage. Deep and tender affections tempered the severity of pure intellect, and the reason imparted steadiness and consistency to his emotional nature.

But underlying and permeating all his feelings and all his views was a profound love of country, transcended only by his love of universal liberty. This was the first lesson of his boyhood and the last teaching of his ripened manhood.

"Qui didicit patriæ quid debeat, et quid amicis."

That memorable impromptu speech at Independence Hall, which now seems prophetic, was inspired by the ruling sentiment of his life. He preferred death by the hand of violence to failure in the attempt to rescue the republic and the rights of man from their threatened assassination by traitors.

He fell, but it was in the hour of victory. In his life was realized the mythical struggle between good and evil. The poetic justice dimly seen in the old Greek tragedy was here enacted in the grand drama of actual history. He was obstructed, defamed, lampooned and caricatured, but amid it all, his mild temper, his charity, his consciousness of rectitude, and his abiding conviction of the justice and ultimate triumph of his cause, seemed to say, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

His time came at last, and he entered the dark valley beneath the arch of triumph, inscribed with the "Well done" of a faithful servant. With invisible banners waving over him, and to music unheard by mortal ears, he passed from our sight.

The remarkable qualities of the distinguished statesman who has fallen by the hand of an assassin, like the Prince of Orange and Henry the Fourth, in the beneficent exercise of his great faculties, will receive the encomiums of his stricken countrymen, now in the freshness of their grief; but as the tide of events in successive waves sweeps on, the memory of these will be obliterated, and the place of our martyr in history will be fixed, not by personal characteristics, but by the glorious results of the great struggle in which he was the loyal leader.

Men in this vast assembly may have differed honestly as to the measures and policy of his administration, yet, when we remember that traitors had organized an army in the heart of the republic; had defied legitimate authority and beleagured the capital; had driven the feeble forces of the government from their strongholds, and wrested from the Union an area of rich States out of which Empires of European dimensions might be carved; that while

> "Long time in even scale
> The battle hung,"

The premeditated cruelty of rebel authorities had murdered, by the slow torture of hunger, sixty thousand prisoners of war, and hundreds of thousands of the strong and beautiful of the land had perished; when we remember all this, and consider that the struggle was for union and free government, can we not agree that he acted from a felt necessity? Can we not agree, here at his obsequies, and in the presence of this universal sorrow, that in the creation of a mighty military power, in the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, in military arrests, in the confiscation of rebel property, and in the proclamation of emancipation, in it all, that he followed the dictates of an honest mind and a patriot's heart?

But whatever private griefs men may have upon these subjects, in the contemplation of the grand results, thank God, we stand upon no party platform. We are here to-day as one people, bowed by a common sorrow, and jubilant over a common victory.

As a nation, we must congratulate ourselves upon a diplomacy which brought conciliation and forbearance to the management of delicate foreign relations, and secured prestige and pre-eminence abroad, without the hazards and commercial interruptions of foreign war.

And is there a man in this assembly, is there a man in the commonwealth—the proud birth-state of Webster,—who does not rejoice to-day that the old controversy in respect to the nature of the general government, waged for a quarter of a century between North and South, on the hustings and the floor of Congress, by a partizan press, and at last by an appeal to arms, has been settled by the war, beyond a peradventure, in the interests of constitutional liberty? We know at last in what we believe. We have a government from which no State can secede, and which has the right and strength to maintain its own existence.

Is there any man within the sound of my voice; can any loyal man be found in any dark nook or corner of the earth, whose heart does not exult and turn with gratitude to God when he remembers that a people more numerous than the whole population of the land at the birth of our nationality, have been lifted from the prison-house of a crushing and hopeless bondage to the light and privileges of a Christian civilization? Can any man who loves liberty, or the honor and safety of his country, regret that the Declaration drawn by Jefferson has been supplemented by the Declaration drawn by Lincoln, and that "unalienable rights" have been restored to men who, in their poverty and suffering stood loyal amid the general wreck of the great defection? All this has been done by proclamation and law, by the out-poured treasures of a noble people, and by the heroic struggles of a thousand battle-fields.

A profound conviction of the superiority of republican to other forms of government, of their inherent capacity to meet the wants of an expanding people, and to perpetuate themselves amid the antagonisms and discontents which will hereafter arise from a crowded population, is the justification which citizen and soldier must plead for their steady and unwavering support of the government in the prolonged expenditure of national treasure, and in the outpouring of tides of blood.

But to you, soldiers, we yield the highest meed of honor, for you have rescued the Union from disintegration; you have unfurled the old flag with no star dropped from its place, over camp and court in belligerent States, and have washed the dark stains from its folds in your own precious blood. Mingling with your love of country was the inspiration of a loftier thought. Equally with your fallen chief you comprehended that to you God had given the grand and fearful responsibility of fighting battles for all times and all peoples; that the struggle was between liberty and absolutism, not in America only, but in all lands; that treasure and life were lavished, not for the preservation of the precious inheritance of our fathers only, but for the conservation of the principles of civil liberty and social progress to the children of other nationalities as well. It was for such precious things, and to prevent the establishment of an oligarchy more pestilent and dishonorable than a European despotism, upon soil purchased by revolutionary blood and the revenues of free labor, that our people have taxed their industry and wealth, and given up their sons to the hazards of war. It was these things, brave men, scarred veterans of a hundred battles, that steeled your hearts and nerved your arms at Shiloh and Antietam at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, that sustained you as you trod the gauntlet of fire from Chatanooga to Atlanta, as you swept from that citadel of war to the tide waters of the Atlantic, and thence passed through the swamps of the Carolinas to the surrender of Johnston.

It was the support of such thoughts that upheld your vanishing ranks in that bloodiest swath of death through the Wilderness, and in the perilous siege of Richmond, until you crushed, as

with the hammer of Thor, the iron legions of Lee, and with "banner high advanced" entered the capital of treason.

Your work is done, and well done. History will give you a place with the Greeks at Marathon and the Ironsides at Naseby. Liberty will date her triumphs from your battle-fields. We welcome you back with pride and exultation to your native hills, to the homes and firesides which you have rescued from dishonor, and where you will be cherished by a grateful and generous people. But you are not all here. Where are the brave boys, who with flaunting banners and to the tread of martial music went forth with you to the tented field? Alas, ours is no solitary grief. We mourn to-day for a martyred host. They went down beneath the bullet's stroke and the tread of the war-horse, by the murmuring rivers and on the hot plains of the South, and there you have left them with their glory. Each in his place like a hero fell,

> "With his back to the field and his feet to the foe,
> And leaving in battle no blot on his name,
> Looks proudly to heaven from the death-bed of fame."

The places that have known them will be vacant, and their familiar faces will greet us never again; but their deeds will be told in literature and song; and time, which mocks at marble and brass, will hold their memory fresh to the latest generations.

To us, fellow-citizens, belongs the hazardous duty of consummating the great work which the army has advanced to the glorious assurance of completion.

The bitter animosities and intense excitements of the prolonged struggle had wearied the public mind, so that with the approach of peace it was rapidly dropping into a state of moral debility and lassitude of temper. Familiarity with treason and the inhuman cruelties of the war had dulled our apprehension of the superlative guilt of these crimes.

Prudence and magnanimity lie between cruel severity and childish weakness. In the joy of victory there was danger lest we should swing to weakness, and forget the claims which every

legitimate ruler in Christendom could lay upon us to assert the dignity and authority of righteous government.

The foul attack upon Sumpter broke the trammels of party and kindled a flame of patriotism which licked up the lust of gain and brought us as a united people to the defense of the Union, so the fiendish murder of our magnanimous President may be the means under God of lifting both people and rulers to the level of their great duties. Never was vigilance the price of liberty more emphatically than at this hour.

The unnatural alliance between liberty and slavery must never be renewed. The seeds of civil discord and treason must never again be planted in the foundations of the government. The social and civil institutions, the industry and education of all the States must henceforth be homogeneous that our national legislation may not be a patchwork of unappeasable antagonisms, and our deliberative assemblies the disorderly arenas of sectional discord and savage violence.

The school of politics which teaches the false theories that underlie all forms of oppression must cease to exist, and then the rivalries which restrain productive industry, and retard the progress of popular enlightenment will never arise, and the red hand of treason will add no new names to the roll of our martyred heroes and statesmen.

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